

## Message Text

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44

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 SAM-01 NEA-11 AID-20 COME-00 EB-11 FRB-02

TRSE-00 XMB-07 OPIC-12 CIEP-02 LAB-06 SIL-01 OMB-01

DRC-01 /171 W

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R 311455Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4345

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIN, TY

SUBJECT: INCREASED TUNISIAN COOPERATION WITH BLACK AFRICA

1. SUMMARY: AFRICAN TOUR OF PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA HAS LED TO INCREASING COOPERATION BETWEEN TUNISIA AND SEVERAL AFRICAN STATES IN BANKING AREA. IN RELATED DEVELOPMENT, GOT HAS ALSO AGREED TO PROVIDE PROFESSIONAL TRAINING TO IVORY COAST. END SUMMARY.

2. IN INTERVIEW WITH TUNISIAN PRESS AGENCY, HASSEN BELKHODJA, PRESIDENT DIRECTOR GENERAL OF GOVERNMENT-OWNED SOCIETE TUNISIENNE DE BANQUE (STB) AND PROMINENT POLITICAL FIGURE, SAID THAT DURING PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA'S DECEMBER AFRICAN TRIP STB HAD AGREED PROVIDE 20 PERCENT OF CAPITAL FOR MAURITANIAN

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DEVELOPMENT BANC (MDB) BELKHODJA SAID THAT, AS

PART OF OVERALL EFFORT IN MAURITANIA, STB WILL ALSO SEND EXPERTS TO ASSIST MDB. MBEKHODJA, WHO ACCOMPANIED BOURGUIBA ON TRIP, TOLD PRESS THAT AGREEMENT CONCLUDED IN ZAIRE FOR CLOSER COOPERATION BETWEEN EUROPEAN OFFICES OF STB AND ZAIRE'S BANKS.

COOPERATION IN TOURIST SECTOR WAS ALSO DISCUSSED. IN IVORY COAST, COMMON BANKING PROBLEMS DISCUSSED BUT STB DOES NOT PLAN TO ESTABLISH BRANCH THERE. HOWEVER, STB PLANS TO ESTABLISH OFFICE IN DAKAR AND PERHAPS EVEN CREATE A SECOND TUNISO-LIBYAN BANK IN DAKAR, SIMILAR TO THAT ESTABLISHED EARLIER THIS MONTH IN BEIRUT.

3. BELKHODJA POINTED OUT IN INTERVIEW THAT DEVELOPMENT OF BANKING RELATIONS BETWEEN STB AND AFRICAN BANKS COULD LEAD TO DEVELOPMENT OF COMMERCIAL RELATIONS AT LATER STAGE. STB PREPARED CONSIDER INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS IN AFRICA AND IS PARTICIPATING WITH LIBYA BECAUSE OF NEED FOR LARGE QUANTITIES OF FUNDS.

4. BELKHODJA ADDED IN PRESS INTERVIEW THAT DURING HIS AFRICAN VISIT BOURGUIBA HAD SUGGESTED "NEW" IDEA OF "DEVELOPMENT CONTRACTS". SUCH CONTRACTS COULD PERMIT AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EAST COUNTRIES TO USE OWN RESOURCES TO ASSURE BASIC DEVELOPMENT. AS EXAMPLE, BELKHODJA SAID THERE IS NO REASON WHY PETROLEUM OF MIDDLE EAST AND COPPER OF ZAIRE SHOULD BE PROCESSED IN EUROPE.

5. BELKHODJA DISCUSSED TUNISIA'S INTERESTS IN BLACK AFRICA IN SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSION WITH EMBOFF. IN AMPLIFYING POINTS MADE IN PRESS INTERVIEW NOTED ABOVE, HE STRESSED THAT COMBINATION OF TUNISIAN

EXPERIENCE IN FINANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WITH LIBYAN CAPITAL SHOULD PERMIT TUNISIA PLAY IMPORTANT ROLE IN AFRICA. HUMAN RESOURCES FROM TUNISIA AND LIBYAN FINANCIAL RESOURCES SHOULD HELP AFRICAN STATES MAKE BETTER USE OF THEIR OWN NATURAL RESOURCES.

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6. IN RELATED DEVELOPMENT, TUNISIAN MINISTER OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS ENNACEUR AND IVORIAN MINISTER OF TECHNICAL TRAINING BATTESTI, WHO ON OFFICIAL VISIT TO TUNISIA, SIGNED AGREEMENT JANUARY 26 IN FIELD OF PROFESSIONAL TRAINING. TUNISIA AGREES TO PROVIDE PROFESSIONAL TRAINING TO IVORIANS IN TUNISIA AND TO SEND INSTRUCTORS AND SPECIALISTS TO IVORY COAST.

7. COMMENT: THESE VARIOUS AGREEMENTS REFLECT  
INCREASED GOT INTEREST IN IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH  
BLACK AFRICA. STB ALREADY INVOLVED IN NIGER. WHILE  
THIS IS PARTLY MOTIVATED BY POLITICAL OBJECTIVE OF  
INFLUENCING AFRICAN ATTITUDES TOWARD MIDDLE EAST  
CONFLICT, TUNISIANS ALSO BELIEVE FINANCIAL AND  
ECONOMIC COOPERATION WITH AFRICA CAN BENEFIT TUNISIA.  
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